

# THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS OF GHANA'S CAPE COAST AS A DESTINATION

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THESIS  
DEGREE IN TOURISM  
April, 2010



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<b>The title of your thesis</b>  THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS OF GHANA'S CAPE COAST AS A DESTINATION	<b>Number of pages</b>  52p
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<p>The tourism industry has contributed significantly to Ghana's economy, particularly in recent times, as the sector continues to demonstrate its potential as a key driver of growth. For example, between 2000 and 2005, visitor arrivals and spending increased by 46 per cent and 68 percent respectively. The industry is currently the third largest foreign exchange earner after merchandise exports and remittances from abroad and has become one of the most important and fastest growing sectors of the Ghanaian economy. Tourism receipts in Ghana are forecasted to reach \$1.5 billion by the end of 2010. Cape Coast municipality that is regarded as the brain box of Ghana's tourism still lack the concept and dignity tourism site should attain. Therefore there is the need to access and evaluate the current situation of the tourism sector in the municipality and as a result recommend what needs to be done and has been done by more world famous tourism destinations and countries to get to where they are today.</p> <p>This thesis was purely conducted based on literature review by reviewing, analyzing and authenticating the projects and reports already written on similar topic and project. Tourism textbooks, journals, Internet sources and internet reports were the secondary sources reviewed.</p> <p>The keys findings of the research were aimed at analyzing the tourism potentials of Cape Coast as a destination so as to make it attractive to both domestic and international tourists.</p>	
Key words; local community, community benefit, branding, eco-tourism.	

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# 1 Introduction

International tourism has been a key industry in some favorably located less developed countries like Mexico, Turkey, the Caribbean islands and so on for decades. These countries have benefited from the international tourism as a result of being adjacent to the key generating countries of the Western Europe and North America. However, as the frontiers of international tourism spread from these places to more remote and less developed peripheries, these nations have since the early 1980s been losing part of their markets.

One of such remote periphery where international tourism is now experiencing impressive growth rates is sub-Saharan Africa. Ghana is among the African countries where the tourism industry has suddenly moved from sideline to the centre stage of economic strategies. Ghana's economy, which is largely agro-based, was in the past characterized by dwindling foreign reserves, high inflation, depreciation of the cedi and fluctuating growth. Tourism industry is the fastest growing service industry in Ghana and has grown to become one of the key sub-sectors of the Ghanaian economy since 1982. It has shown substantial annual growth, and hence more research has gone into the operations of the sector in order to examine its economic potential and contribution as well as how the industry could be internationally recognized and patronized most especially Cape Coast municipality which is regarded as the heartbeat of tourism in Ghana. It is the third foreign exchange earner after merchandise export and remittances from abroad. Areas the sector has shown greater improvements include employment generation (direct and indirect) international tourist arrivals, foreign exchange earnings, revenue accruing to tourist sites, increase in number of hotels and similar establishments and other tourism supply organizations (Koutra Christina 2007).

Currently the tourism sector contributed more than 1.2 billion dollars annually which is five per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provided 250,000 direct jobs to the economy. In West Africa, Ghana leads its neighbors as the number one tourist destination. The growth of tourism in this country is a result of the political stability, as well as social, economic and technological changes that have taken place in the country. It is also due to the hosting of important events like Pan African Festivals (PANAFEST), Emancipation Day Celebrations, National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC), among others (Ghana statistical service 2009).



Map of Ghana showing  
Cape Coast

Picture 1: map of Ghana (source: Google)

### 1.1 Research Problem

Cape Coast Metropolitan District is the capital of Central region of Ghana is noted for tourism, fishing and agriculture. It is said to be the leading producers of fishing industry in Ghana. It also contributes to agriculture so far as food is concerned. However, the metropolitan’s agricultural industry (fishing and crop) has not played any significant role in the economic development of the area. As a result, there is high unemployment and low economic development in the metropolis and this has adversely affected the standard of living for the local people.

Tourism has played major role economically in countries such as Mexico, Turkey, Nepal ,India to mention a few, Therefore, the keys findings of the research is aimed at analyzing the tourism potentials of Cape Coast as a destination so as to make it attractive to both domestic and international tourists thereby im-

proving the area's economic and infrastructural developments. Thus the questions or problems that this study seeks to give some ideas or answer are;

- How can tourism contribute to the economic and infrastructural development of Central Region (Cape Coast) of Ghana?
- How can Cape Coast focus on its potentials to attract more tourists?
- What are some of the problems and prospects of tourism industry so far as the development of Cape Coast metropolitan district is concern?

## 1.2 Research aim and Objectives

The contribution of Travel & Tourism to Gross Domestic Product is expected to decline from 7.6% in 2009 to 6.9% by 2019. Real GDP growth for Travel & Tourism economy is expected to be 4.9% in 2010 and to average 4.7% per annum over the coming 10 years (wtcc 2009). Thus, the findings of the study is hoped would focus on the tourism potentials of Cape Coast municipality and also help improve the tourism industry so as to play its developmental role effectively and efficiently in the central Region and Cape Coast in particular.

## 1.3 Methodology

Tools and techniques that will be employed in the research process are underlined in this section. In collecting data for a research, usually different tools and methods are used. For the purpose of this study, a qualitative research method where literatures would be reviewed with carefully selection and collecting of data. This will enable the research process to be tackled systematically in order to arrive at a concrete conclusion.

SWOT analysis and benchmarking are also tools used in analyzing the potential strength for Cape Coast to boost its tourism potentials. In terms of its competitors, the method used will strengthen the destination ahead of its rivals by way of knowing what they offer and how they do it so as to build upon it.

## 1.4 The researcher's relation to the destination

The researcher is a Ghanaian living and studying in Finland for almost four year. The researcher has appreciated the importance of tourism industry and its branding in modern days that has positively affected well known international destinations. After touring many famous destinations in Europe and Asia and attending tourism fair and tradeshow such as matkamessut in Finland, IMEX in Germany, I have then realized that Cape Coast has the potential of becoming famous as a destination since it has almost all the resources these famous tourism destinations offer.

The municipality has a lot to offer in terms of tourism thereby attracting more tourists both domestically and internationally. I acknowledge both economic and social impact tourism has on a destination and thus wish to outline what Cape Coast could offer tourists ranging from eco-tourism to cultural tourism.

The outcome of this research has been commissioned to Bonokyempeng eco-tourism situated in Techiman, in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana which also has similar problems as Cape Coast, therefore this research will help it discover its tourism potentials and in a way focus on its selling points.



## 2 Tourism destination development

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of the theoretical concepts relevant to this study, this will enable us develop ideas, which will later on serves as a ground for comparing our findings and finally concluding the aim of this research study, in terms of highlighting and promotion the tourism potentials of the chosen destination, Cape Coast of Ghana (Dubinsky et al 2000, 291).

### 2.1 Definition of a destination and the tourism industry

In discussing tourism, the term destination becomes ubiquitous; however, it is not always clear what a destination is. Be it a hotel, a city, a region, or a country is always a question that confuses many.

Destination is defined as “a country, state, region, city or town which is marketed or markets itself as a place for tourists to visit.” However, regardless of what a destination offers, it must market itself to its consumers (Bierman 2003).

The free online dictionary defines destination as; “the destined end of a journey or voyage”

“The ultimate end or purpose for which something is created or a person is destined.”

“The ultimate purpose for which something is done” (Free online dictionary 2009).

On the other hand, in the sense of business tourism, destination is the place where the main focus of the business trip will be, be it a conference, sales presentation, an incentive travel package or negotiation meeting. It can be in a country, region, rural area, an individual city or single coastal resort (John et al 2001, 58).

In this research, destination is regarded as a geographical location be it city, town country village or any administrative location in the Cape Coast municipal area (Swarbrooke et al 2001).

### 2.2 The Destination Lifecycle model

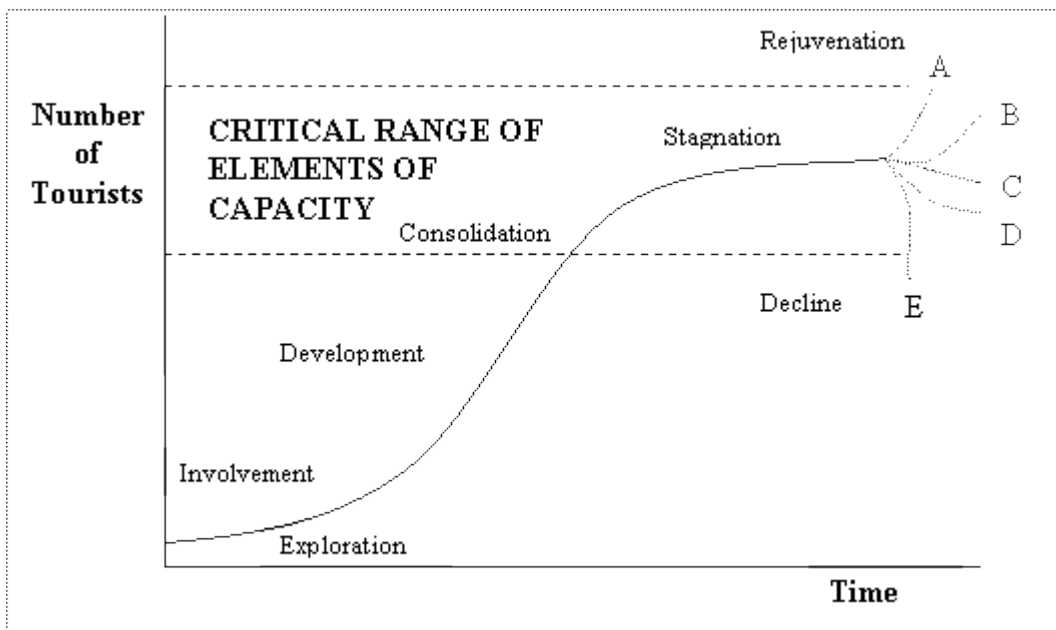
Like all products, destinations been regarded as a tourism product also have a lifecycle. The lifecycle model of a tourist destination explains that a destination begins as a relatively unknown place or site and tourists initially come in small numbers notwithstanding lack of access, facilities, and local knowledge (Miller & Gallucci 2004).

As more people discover the destination, the word spreads about its attractions and its amenities are increased and improved, hence it develops.

As tourist arrivals then begin to grow rapidly, it implies that the said destination is now well known (Stagnation). The rise from Exploration to Stagnation often happens very rapidly, as implied by the exponential nature of the growth curve.

The dotted points in the below figure indicating A-E are examples of a subset of possible outcomes beyond Stagnation. Examples of things that could cause a destination to follow trajectories A and B toward rejuvenation are technological developments or infrastructure improvements leading to increased carrying capacity. Examples of things that could cause a destination to follow trajectories C and D are increased congestion and unsustainable development, causing the resources that originally drew visitors to the destination to become corrupted, or no longer exist. The trajectory in Figure 1 of most interest to this research is trajectory E, which is the likely path of a destination following a disaster or crisis.

It is also important to point out that the Law of Diminishing Returns could cause a destination to follow trajectories similar to those of C or D, and that the concepts and practices of destination recovery, as applied to destinations recovering from a disaster, could easily be applied to a destination in Decline as a result of the Law of Diminishing. Based on the above, Cape Coast as a destination could be located in between the involvement and exploration line on the picture below since tourists are now exploring its potentials (Miller & Gallucci 2004).



Picture 2; Hypothetical Evolution of a Tourist Area (source, Miller and Gallucci 2004)

### 2.3 The scope of tourism industry

The tourism industry is a multi-sectorial one and therefore the concept of tourism cannot be easily defined. However, at the United Nations Conference held in Rome in 1963 on International tourism and travel, this definition was adopted "Tourism involves the temporal movement of people from one geographical area to another outside their normal place of residence".

Tourism is the temporal movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence (Cooper 2008).

Therefore it could be said that tourism covers both demand and supply. Thus, the tourism phenomenon entails:

- An element of transfer, related to movement of people to locations outside their normal residence. This is the dynamic element in tourism.
- There is the interaction between man (human) who is the subject (tourist) and facilities as the subject in the destination area.

Tourism can also be classified into domestic and international. In domestic tourism, people travel outside their normal place of abode to another area within the same country. In this case; there are language, currency or documentation barriers. Thus domestic tourism has no balance of payment implications, except that it is a substitute for foreign tourism since sustained visit to attractions sites in the country depends very much on it (Goeldne& Ritchie 2006, 337).

International tourism on the other hand involves people travelling to another country, other than their own, which is a separate national unit with its political and economic system (Goeldne& Ritchie 2006).

Here, fear and safety, lack of time, cost, travel documents, currency and language to mention a few might become a barrier. Both the domestic and international visitors are called tourists (Goeldne& Ritchie 2006).

### 2.4 Tourism as a factor in regional development

The tourism literature abounds with expositions for adopting tourism as a strategy for regional development. Due to lack of published African examples however, the researcher makes references mostly to external examples.

Most coastal, mountainous and rural areas are favorite destinations for sunbathing and adventure-seeking tourists. Often, these are regions, which, in a national context, lag behind, in socio-economic development. It is therefore argued that tourism could serve as a means of redistributing wealth geographically from richer metropolitan areas to the poorer, peripheral regions (Pearce 1993).

Clearly, this optimism derives from a high level of domestic vacationing, which currently obtains in the mass consumption societies of Western Europe and North American. In these economies it is estimated that for each vacationer crossing an international border, there are nine others holidaying within national borders, thus in the developed world domestic tourism forms a huge segment of the industry with very high economic significance. However, given the low per capita income of less-developed countries the degree to which such internal redistribution of income can be achieved is likely to be negligible and indeed most Third World countries develop and promote tourism with an eye on the 'tourist dollar' from abroad (Wttc 2006).

Nevertheless, there is a strong case for promoting tourism in remote, underdeveloped regions. 'The resources involved, that is, the beaches, exotic cultures, scenic mountains and landscape, do not readily lend themselves to exploitation for agricultural and manufacturing purposes. As Duffield & Long (1981) put it: ironically, the consequences of lack of development, the unspoilt character of the landscape and distinctive local cultures become positive a resource as far as tourism is concerned.' Thus according to the World Tourism Organization (2003) in areas where the local conditions are not conducive to the development of other activities, the landscape, climate, water, air and sun can become "raw materials" for tourism(Wto 2003).

Tourism can also be used as a developmental tool even in declining urban centers. The presence of large collection of cultural artifacts in museums, historical landmarks, architectural monuments, coupled with the large stock of entertainment plants, make urban centers major tourist markets, with the propensity for holiday-taking being highest there (Richards 2007). Reviving a declining metropolitan region could therefore be achieved through tourism promotion.

Colin Michael (et al 2008) states that the following benefits could be derived from tourism promotion in the context of regional development:

- Income generation
- Employment generation
- Improvement in economic structure
- Encouragement in entrepreneurial activity

- Improve in population distribution

## 2.5 Pull factors in tourism

A pull factor of a tourism destination could be referred to a those factors of a destination or site that serves as an attraction force and the knowledge that tourist hold about a destination be it beaches, rain forest, mountains, eco-tourism etc (Gnoth 1997). They are also the intrinsic motivators, such as the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure and social interactions (Uysal& Jurovski 1994). They are the factors perceived positive of a potential or real destination (Mason 2008, 8). Such factors according to my discussion below will focus on attractions, ecotourism and cultural heritage that a destination has and which could make it a unique selling point.

### 2.5.1 Attractions

A tourist attraction is a place of interest where tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited cultural value, historical significance, natural or built beauty, or amusement opportunities. It can also be explained as those sites that are non-home place that interest the tourists. It should be observed that, for this to achieve its purpose there should be three components, a tourists, a site and also an interest or reason to the tourist to tour/travel (Lew et al 2008, 37).

Whereas, a tourist attraction site is, the place that most people think of whenever they think of tourist attraction. Such amenities may include amenities, museums, festivals, natural parks and gardens, safari and so on (Lew et al 2008).

**Amenities/infrastructure-** Destination as distinct from origin or market refers to a place where tourism intend to spend their time when away from home. The tourists' destination can be influenced by examining several elements at the destination .They may include basic infrastructure, accommodation, transport, catering services, entertainment, visitors' information office and many more which harmonizes and enhances the attractiveness of a destination (Jafari 2003, 145).

### 2.5.2 Ecotourism

Over the last two decades, ecotourism has gathered supporters across the globe. Ecotourism is the main success story from the alternative tourism debate that originated during the 1980s in response to wide-

spread critique of the impact of mass tourism; particularly in the developing world (Goodwin 1996, 277-291).

There has been much debate on the definitions of ecotourism, but some of its mostly agreed characteristics are as follows:

- Involves visit to natural or cultural sites of the interest
- Involves an element of interpretation or education about these sites
- Minimizes the negative impact of the visit on the site
- Maximize the positive involvement of local people and the benefits they derive from ecotourism.

Ecotourism also defined as travelling to relatively undisturbed and uncontaminated natural area with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild (plants and animals) as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas (Fennell 2008).

Ecotourism defined by other scholars is related to responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people” (Fennel 2007).

To elaborate more on the definition, the ecotourism society (TES) developed seven basic principles of ecotourism:

- Avoids negative impacts that can damage or destroy the integrity or character of the natural or cultural environments being visited.
- Educates the traveler on the importance of conservation.
- Directs revenues to the conservation of natural areas and the management of protected areas.
- Brings economic benefits to local communities and directs revenues to local people living adjacent to protected areas.
- Emphasizes the need for planning and sustainable growth of the tourism industry, and seeks to ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental “carrying capacity”.
- Retains a high percentage of revenues in the host country by stressing the use of locally owned facilities and services.
- Increasingly relies on infrastructure that has been developed sensitively in harmony with the environment— minimizing use of fossil fuels, conserving local plant and wildlife, and blending with the natural environment (Fennell 2007).

In view of the above, Ecotourism could be defined as travel to enjoy the world’s amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either. A vital requirement is that visitors should show respect for both the environment and the people who live in it.

Ecotourism's status as a bona fide vehicle for sustainable tourism was cemented during the 2002 UN International Year of Ecotourism, with subject *Quebec declaration on eco tourism* held in Quebec, Canada. As a result it is now generally agreed that ecotourism forms a distinctive part of the movement towards sustainable tourism. However Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism, 2002 distinguished ecotourism from the wider concept of sustainable tourism by the following characteristics:

- Contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage
- Includes locals and indigenous communities in its planning, development and operation, contributing in their well-being
- Interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitors

Ecotourism brings people to the wilderness places, in that case being the ability to accommodate tourists and providing the experiences they seek at the same time. The advantages for the wilderness area are that "because (ecotourism) is primarily natural resources based, protection and conservation of these natural resources is very crucial for sustainable ecotourism". Global conservationists agree that ecotourism as one of the major means of both conserves and developing remote countries (Kusler 1990, 2-8).

### 2.5.3 Culture as a pull factor

Over the years, cultural tourism has been growing at a faster pace that people nowadays see it as biggest and fasters source of travel whenever tourism comes to mind, (Richards 2007,26).It is been supported by the idea of tourist traveling for the purpose of education and exploring the way of life of different people and culture(Richards 2007,41).

ICOMOS (the UN's International Council on Monuments and Sites), in its International Cultural Tourism Charter states that: "At the broadest level, the natural and cultural heritage belongs to all people. We each have a right and responsibility to understand, appreciate and conserve its universal values".

Hughes (1996) also argues that cultural tourism "tends to be applied to trips whenever cultural resources are visited regardless of initial motivation. “

Stebbins (1996) on the other hand writes, "Cultural tourism is a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological".

In y view, it as travel directed toward experiencing the arts, heritage, and special character of unique places. It includes arts (galleries, studios, performing and visual arts), cultural activities (festivals, celebrations, rituals, events), and physical heritage, buildings and environments (Richards 2007).

Cultural tourism represents an area of significant economic benefit to museums and heritage sites. Challenging economic times in particular require cultural and heritage facilities to explore ways and means to increase attendance and self-generated revenues and to develop its potentials. Doing so requires them to look carefully at a number of issues ranges from operating policies and practices. Hence cultural tourism destination should focus on issues such as customer service, partnerships and packaging opportunities, education, advertizing, branding and marketing as well as be open to entrepreneurial approaches while continuing to meet their heritage preservation and education mandates (Richards 2007).



Picture 3; tourism eating local Ghana meal (source: Flickr)





Picture 4; Pounding “fufu” (source; Flickr)

## 2.6 Summary of the theory

Various studies have attempted to illustrate the various stages of destination life cycle, however, up to date Butler’s (1980) hypothetical model of resort evolution is the most widely accepted model suggesting that “destination become unattractive with the passage of time, as visitor numbers increase and their carrying capacities are exceeded, and are unable to compete with other newer resorts” (Smith, 1991:192). According to this model the stages of resort evolution are: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation as illustrated in the above picture. Therefore, it could be seen that, in order for a destination to through the life cycle ladder, it must focus and develop its pull factors. Such factors that attract more tourists worldwide include eco tourism, attractions and cultural heritage which has become the engine of growth in tourism (Andriotis, 2001).

### 3 The Research Settings

The research method for this study is literature review. Literature review as a research method addresses complex topics by providing a map of research in a particular field and thus is more suited to theory building and hypothesis generation (Brotherton 2007).

Literature review is used to summarize, evaluate, synthesis and interpret previous research, arguments and ideas in order to make sense of current knowledge in the subject area being researched.

Literature review helps specialist to find out the recent developments and enlighten them how to develop the new idea and make use of it (Machi & McEvoy 2008).

Literature review can be legitimately drawn upon a wide range of materials. This can include published and unpublished scholarly writing, such as books, journals, articles, conference proceedings, abstract, dissertations and theses, bibliographies, discussion papers and government reports. It might also include document that are not published in the conventional way, such as online information, consultation papers, strategy documents, bulletins, circulars, resource packs, expert opinion, letters, personal communication, newspaper articles, audiovisual items and leaflets. Gathering of information from different data will help to capture the full range of perspectives and ideas currently in circulation (Brotherton 2007).

In this research, a large body of literature about a particular topic can be analyzed and summarized; this makes it easier the researcher to get access to concise and comprehensible information and knowledge on a particular topic of interest. This is important because no individual reader is able to consult all the researches made on a particular topic. Furthermore, literature review is important in uncovering new evidences and refuting controversies as well as encouraging objective thinking. (Lawrence & Brenda 2008)

A literature review can be just a simple summary of the sources, but it usually has an organizational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis. A summary is a recap of the important information of the source, but a synthesis is a re-organization, or a reshuffling, of that information. It might give new interpretations of old material or combine new with old interpretations. Or it might trace the intellectual progression of the field, including major debates/arguments. And depending on the situation, the literature review may evaluate the sources and advise the reader on the most pertinent or relevant (Brotherton 2007).

The research is more of secondary source/ literature review with the aim of acquiring data, evaluating, organizing, restructuring and analyzing data based on the facts and logical conclusions on the materials collected. Therefore, the research comprise of written text and pictures, case study and information's and

reports of already certified authors and organizations particularly on Ghana, Africa and world tourism as a whole. Moreover, the research will not only focus on the definitions of the above studies but prove its reliability and validity as well.

The settings of this research will focus on trends that could help Cape Coast to become a destination by way of branding and marketing techniques. Well renowned marketing techniques and tools published and used by the world's most marketing researchers would be adopted to enhance this research to achieve a better goal. At the end of it all, the reliability of these tools/techniques and the literature reviewed would be proven.

### 3.1 Case study

The history of conducting a case study goes back to the beginning of the 20th century and the earliest use of this research method have been traced back to Europe (Tellis 1997). Case study has been helpful in this research since the researcher is a student and does not directly involve in any organization working in the Ghana tourism industry. It has helped the research to come to the conclusion that Ghana, like any other Sub-Saharan African country has the potential to boost its tourism industry but lack the man power and insight on how to brand and market its tourism potentials.

**Case study** is defined as a research strategy, an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context by way of analyzing archival information, be it a group of persons, a particular person or a community (Gerring 2007).

The **case study** of this thesis will concentrate on data gathered through documentation and archival records. The researcher is aware that more detailed information could have been attained by conducting interviews or through personal observations but due to time constraint these forms of information gathering were not possible.

The case study in this particular research followed a clear structured pattern that started with data gathering. The information used in this research relies purely on secondary already published data and does not include a primary research. Data sources used in this research were the internet which includes utilizing an electronic database, books and previously conducted empirical researches. After the data collection process was completed the data was organized according to its relevance and so that it would in a best possible way highlight the focus of the study. During this process, the reliability and validity of the data is guaranteed. After determining the relevant information the structure of this study which centralizes around the critical literature review was formed. The literature review was then to be complemented with a

case study which illustrates the relevance of this particular study and around which the research findings could be build upon.

### 3.1.1 Documentary analysis

In order to answer the research questions, meaning has to be given to the collected data. The chosen literature is first tentatively analyzed and summarized with the aim to produce concepts or categories which provide a condensed and general description of the phenomena in question. Through this process analyzed data are simplified, categorized and conceptualized (Miles & Huberman 2004). The data to be analyzed are those already written either as a report, article, book or any other source already addresses to Ghana or the topic at hand.

The data, collected for the literature review, is first read thoroughly several times, so that the researcher will get familiar with the information. The next step was to find answers to research questions; therefore all the concepts and sentences that answered the research questions are carefully marked down. After this, all the marked concepts and sentence are listed and the data is simplified by categorizing data into similarities, meanings and common factors of the same phenomenon (Sivia & Skilling 2006).

**Document** is “a written, printed or electronic substance that bears the original, official, or legal form of something and can be used to furnish decisive evidence or information”. It can be photograph or recordings (Pearsall 1999 543)

**Analyzes** is “is the details examination of the content or structure of piece of writing or something, mainly as a basis for discussion, interpretation or interrogation” (Pearsall 1999, 59).

Therefore, documentary analyzes would be the detailed examination of the elements and structure of documents for the purpose for which it was acquired. Hence, in this thesis, documents from the WTO, WTTC, dissertations, reports and information from the Ghana tourism board and many more would be analyzed and presented (Hodson 1999, 1). The reason been that most of the information needed to make this topic realistic could be found in these official documents whose findings and research are well structure and accepted.

### 3.2 Bench marking

Comparing the tourism situation of Cape Coast to that of other parts of Africa and the world whose credibility in tourism is high could enable the ministry and stakeholders of Cape Coast tourism to know how to manage and market their potentials properly. Benchmarking as a marketing tool has been used by many marketing managers to assess their situation in the market.

According to Ritchie & Crouch 2000, Benchmarking is an improvement process used to discover and incorporate best practices into your operations. It is also the process used in management in which organizations evaluate various aspects of their processes in relation to the best practice, usually within their own sector(Zairi 1996).Benchmarking in tourism industry could be based on;

1. Benchmarking profit oriented tourism businesses such as accommodation suppliers, Restaurants, Airlines, Tour operators and travel Agencies.
2. Benchmarking non-profit businesses in tourism industry such as national or Regional tourism board, attractions operated by public agencies for example museums, galleries, operas, and theaters and so on.
3. Benchmarking the destinations itself National, Regional or local.

This research approach will help the researcher to learn from the best worldwide destination countries and thus incur their strength into the Ghanaian tourism industry. (Ritchie et al.2001)

### 3.3 Literature Review

The thesis will be conducted by using literature review/secondary data to acquire information. The research will focus on past research already conducted on similar cases, journals, blogs, report from Ghana Government and the Bank of Ghana as well as those done by internationally recognized bodies that are valid and reliable will be used. Information from Ghana statistical service, Ghana tourism board and Ghana information service will also be analyzed and the thesis will be conducted through such bodies. This source of gathering data will enable me to look at the research topic from different perspectives, thus enabling a broad view on the subject. Also it is fairly easily accessible and the data collection will take less time (Saunders, Lewis &Thornhill 2007, 249)

A literature review is an all-inclusive study and explanation of books, articles and internet sources, magazines, reports that relate to a particular topic. Literature review is carried out to answer research questions by researching and analyzing relevant literature that are associated to the topic in question. It is followed by an overview, interpretation and future implication of the findings (Lawrence &Brenda 2008).

### 3.4 Reliability and Validity

Literature reviews analyzes and interprets ideas and arguments. This requires the reviewer to combine, classify and then organize all the information they have collected in order to make connections between individual documents, explain any differences or similarities between authors and find new meaning from the literature as a whole (Proctor 2005). The data analyzed for this research are those that are reliable and valid and has either related features or has similar framework linked to the study at hand.

**Reliability** refers to the consistency in reaching the same results when the measurement is made over and over again (Proctor 2005, 208). Reliability refers to the degree of consistency, which is assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on a different occasion. Simply put, reliability in this research study is how accurate the data collected and where they were collected. It is an established fact that all the data collected for my research are current and those from highly recognized bodies and institutions (Dr. Cano 2009).

**Validity** on the other hand means truth interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers (Brotherton 2007, 213). Validity in this context suggests that all the materials reviewed are those written for similar purpose either in Ghana or elsewhere.

## 4 Travel and tourism in Ghana

This chapter presents a brief survey of the evolution and present state of travel and tourism in Ghana so as to provide the necessary background of our analysis. While tourism is perceived by Ghanaian tourism planners and producers as a “modern” phenomenon, its roots go back further than independence than Britain in 1957. Travel and the temporary strangers are not new in the Ghanaian societies although, tourism in Ghana has some added dimensions, there remains a traditional frame of reference which is applicable to this thesis. Ghanaians have long been in contact with foreigners and have travelled within the country before the official recognition of tourism in the 1960s.

Since then, tourism development have being somewhat slow and intermittent. International tourism has been the only focus until recently. Today, domestic tourism is dimly emerging on the horizon. To aid our understanding of perceptions and attitude of modern Ghanaians to tourist and tourism we examine specifically travel in pre-independence Ghana and tourism in modern Ghana.

### 4.1 Ghana in Brief

Ghana is located in West Africa in the Gulf of Guinea with population of nearly 24 millions. After being under the British rule during colonization era, Ghana was the first sub-Saharan African country to gain its independence in 1957 under its first president Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who then changed its name Gold Coast to Ghana. The country is divided into ten regions namely; Brong-Ahafo, Ashanti, Western, Eastern, Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Greater Accra and Central region. These regions are also divided into 230 constituencies each having members of parliament representing them in the Ghana parliament (Ghana Parliament 2009).

Agriculture is the backbone of Ghana’s economy which accounts for about 37% of GDP and employs about 60% of the workforce (CIA 2009). Ghana’s agriculture comprises mainly of cocoa thus making Ghana the second largest cocoa producer of the world (International Cocoa Initiative 2007). In addition, Ghana is a resource-rich country with minerals such as gold, diamonds, manganese, ore, bauxite and Timber (CIA 2009).

In 2007, a major oil discovery was made in the coast of Ghana which has attracted international investors interest (U.S. Department of State 2009). The banking sector is also vivid in Ghana with a long historical background dating back to 1896 (Amidu 2007, 68)

Moreover, due to the rich mineral and cocoa resources and growing interest on tourism, Ghana has one of the highest GDPs per capita in Africa (U.S. Department of State 2009). The World Bank's country assessment places Ghana at the top of rankings in Africa and the government is making the effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and attain middle-income status by 2015 (The World Bank 2008) no wonder the 30th anniversary of the world tourism day under the theme 'Tourism - Celebrating Diversity' was held in Ghana making it the first of its kind on the African continent. (UNWTO 2009)

#### 4.2 Pre-Independence travel in Ghana

Travel as an activity among the inhabitants of modern Ghana is not an importation from the industrial countries, but existed long before coming into contact with the Europeans on the coast in the fifteenth century. Migration, warfare and trade were the main factors that facilitated movement. However, because of increased trading activities engendered by the contact with the Europeans the incidence of travel increased considerably. Migration seemed to be the single factor explaining the movement of people in the region now Ghana and it explains that fact that many of the tribes presently living in the country are not the original inhabitants of the region they occupy (Bourret 1952).

According to tradition and history, the Akans which is a tribe in Ghana, are the first to migrate to the present day Ghana from the North and the Northwest (Bourret 1952).

The Trans-Saharan trade also facilitated travel in the pre-independence Ghana. It occurred between the people and the North Africans. They traded in gold, pepper, salt, ivory (Kimble 1963) and hence travel and tourism boosted. This trade factor also attracted the Portuguese who were the first to arrive along the coast around the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Dantzig 1980).

Accommodation and catering services undertaken with commercial objectives were not in the existence until late colonial era. Hotels have a very short history in the country with the first establishment dating back than the 1930s (Guide to Ashanti Hotels and Restaurants 1986). Therefore, it could be seen that travel and tourism existed in olden days Ghana (Dantzig 1980).

#### 4.3 Tourism in modern Ghana

The 2010 ethical travelers report put Ghana in the 4th place among the top ten developing countries that attract tourist and the 3rd most tourist destination in West Africa (The World's Best Ethical Destinations 2010). The hospitality industry, particularly hotels, had the largest chunk of the revenue taking up 34 per-



cent of the expended income, while the transportation and food sectors had 11 percent each with the entertainment industry enjoying eight per cent, it said (tourism ministry 2009).

According to a business and financial times(B&FT) report, projected tourists arrivals for 2008 was pegged at 698,069 with receipts in monetary value amounting to US\$1.2 million, as against 586,612 arrivals in 2007 amounting to US\$1.17 million.(Ghana business news 2010).The figures indicate that Ghana has not yet hit the intended one million tourists target earmarked in 2007 to coincide with the country's Golden Jubilee celebrations and the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery, since Ghana boasts of many landmark castles and sites used in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The target was developed to make tourism the leading sector of the economy through foreign exchange earnings and employment creation (B&FT 2009).

Currently, tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the economy and is expected to grow at an average rate of 4.1 % per annum over the next two decades (Ghana business news 2010). As in the case of most African countries, the rationale for tourism development is primarily economic and at two levels: macro or national or micro or local. At the macro level, tourism is expected to promote economic growth by generating foreign exchange as well as increase various forms of government revenue. At the micro level, tourism is expected to facilitate job creation, income and revenue distribution, and a balanced regional development, which ultimately should improve the quality of life of residents. Recent adverse developments in Ghana's economy are serving as reminders of the need to diversify the economy in order to reduce dependence on the tradition exports of unprocessed mineral, agricultural and forest products. There are cultural and environmental reasons for tourism development in Ghana as well suffice it to mention that the country has diverse cultural resources that can be rehabilitated and preserved through tourism. Among these are the three World Heritage Forts and Castles in Cape Coast and Elmina in the Central Region, which are undergoing restoration for the development of ethnic tourism. Additionally, the expanding population (doubling every 20 years) has placed increased pressures on the environment and has necessitated conservation of the ecosystem through tourism activities such as the establishment of national preserves. The 15-year Tourism Development Plan has identified several national parks in each of the country's ten regions. These will be developed to form the basis for the country's eco-tourism product component of the tourism industry (Ghana statistical service 2009).

#### 4.4 The Future of Tourism in Ghana

The Government of Ghana has opted to intensify its efforts to develop tourism as a sustainable engine of growth, as well as a means to alleviate poverty through income generation and employment creation. To transform the country into a major leisure destination, a 15-year Tourism Development Plan for the pe-

riod 1996 to 2010 was prepared with financial support from the UNDP and technical assistance from the WTO (UNDP/WTO 1995).

The current plan has a number of interesting and ambitious objectives, which require a brief review. First, it projects total annual international tourist arrivals to increase from only 286,000 in 1995 to as much as 1,062,000 in year 2010. The leisure or holiday segment is targeted to increase from a mere 13.3 percent in 1995 to 50.2 percent in 2010. In real terms, this means 534,000 leisure tourists arriving each year. In comparison, arrivals in the business category would relatively decline from 48.6 to 28.4 percent, but in real terms, it would actually increase from 139,000 to 302,000 annually (Ghana news agency 2009). Second the two main products components to be developed are eco-tourism, based on the country's diverse natural resource attractions, and heritage/ethnic tourism, based on cultural attractions related to the slave trade. This particular component is geared toward attracting Africans in the Diaspora particular from the United States and the Caribbean. The government has also realized the tourism potentials and plans to use it to create employment and revenue (2010 budget statement).

“The contribution of Travel & Tourism to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to rise from 6.7% (GHC1,725.9mn or US\$1,217.8mn) in 2010 to 7.3% (GHC5,519.9mn or US\$3,400.7mn) by 2020. Export earnings from international visitors are expected to generate 13.9% of total exports (GHC1,442.4mn or US\$1,017.8mn) in 2010, growing (nominal terms) to GHC4,244.8mn or US\$2,615.1mn (14.4% of total) in 2020” (wtcc 2010)

#### 4.4.1 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS)

The goal of Ghana's GPRS II is to achieve accelerated and sustainable shared growth, poverty reduction, and promotion of gender equity, protection as well as empowerment of the vulnerable and excluded, within a decentralized, democratic environment. The GPRS II objectives are an important part of Ghana's efforts to reach the poverty-, hunger-, environmental sustainability-, gender equality and women's empowerment-targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Within this context, tourism aims at harnessing the potentials of the sector towards the provision of employment and incomes, while ensuring the preservation of the nation's culture and sustainable management of the environment. Key policy interventions and strategies expected to be pursued include the promotion of tourism as a major source of domestic revenue with a particular focus on women entrepreneurs, promotion of domestic tourism to foster national cohesion as well as redistribution of income, promotion of sustainable and responsible tourism, and promotion of traditional music and crafts industry for tourism trade and export (bank of Ghana 2008).

#### 4.4.2 New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

NEPAD aims to eradicate poverty and place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. Tourism is considered an important vehicle for mobilizing resources in aid of poverty eradication and economic growth. Specific objectives for tourism include the identification of key anchor projects at national and sub-regional levels which generate significant spinoffs and assist in promoting inter-regional economic integration, the development of regional market strategies, the development of research capacity in tourism, and the promotion of partnerships at sub-regional level (e.g. the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA), Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)). Key actions to be pursued include the forging of cooperative partnerships, building of human capacity in the field of sustainable tourism development, prioritizing consumer safety and security issues, marketing African tourism products, increasing regional coordination of tourism initiatives, and developing specialized consumer-targeted marketing campaigns (Ghana government 2009).

## 5 Cape Coast in Ghana as a destination

The Central Region is the former government centre of the Gold Coast. Cape Coast, the capital of the region, was the seat of the British colonial administration up until 1877. The coastline is famous for its ancient forts and castles built by early European traders, and three of them at Elmina, St. Jago and Cape Coast have been identified as World Heritage Monuments by the World heritage. The British captured the place in the 1664 and used the cape coast castle to hub slaves before their journey on the middle passage. The metropolis is noted for Tourism, Fishing and Agriculture. It is said to be the leading producers of fishing industry in Ghana and the gate way to Ghana's tourism industry. Cape Coast Metropolitan is bounded on the south by the Gulf of Guinea, west by the Komenda / Edina / Eguafo / Abrem Municipal, east by the Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese District and north by the Twifu/Hemang/Lower Denkyira District. The Metropolis covers an area of 122 square kilometers and has population of about 82,291 (2000 census).

Among the numerous tourist sites in the region are the forts and castles, kakum national park, bird watching, cultural festivals, eco-tourism, business tourism and many more. Today, the existence of Dutch and Portuguese influence in Cape Coast could still be seen through the existence of forts, castles, churches, schools and cemetery as well as street names and family names. The forts and castles today attract more than 100,000 tourists annually most of which are international tourists (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Education in the region is one of the best in the country and has been in existence since colonial era. Most prominent Ghanaians both in Ghana and living abroad got their educational foundation in the Cape Coast. The most famous schools in the municipality are the Cape Coast University, Cape Coast polytechnic, Adisadel College to mention a few. The current president of Ghana, President John Evans Atta Mills, recent past UN general secretary Kofi Annan, a Ghanaian-American NASA Engineer, Ave Kludze known as the Ghana rocket man ,to name few, all got their foundation in education from Cape Coast (Joseph Lauwery 2006).

### 5.1 Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the easy or difficulty with which tourist can reach destinations of their choice be it road network, airport, rail or harbor (Murphy 2004, 70). The Ghana tourism board is making all the tourism destinations in the country accessible to attract more tourists so that tourist enjoys their total travel experience. It has been recalled that all the tourist attractions in Cape Coast municipality is easily accessible

to all tourist since road networks connecting to all the sites are constructed and maintained constantly, plans are underway to construct an airport in cape coast to enable air transport to the region. Those in remote area are also published in the daily news paper (Daily Graphic) to create its awareness to the people to make known. Electricity and good drinking water is also easily to access (tourism board 2008).



Picture 5; map of Cape Coast (source; Google)

## 5.2 Tourism potential in Cape Coast

Cape Coast's resource base for tourism is quite immense and diverse. Some of the features which make it attractive for tourists include: Natural environmental heritage, Historical heritage, Cultural heritage, and other man-made attractions, as well as Ghana's central location on the world map (Ghana tourism board 2010). The panoramic view of its attractions is also magnificent. Below are some of them;

**Cultural heritage**-This ranges from festivals, crafts and arts, music and dance, architecture, traditional shrines, beliefs and practices, Ghanaian cuisine, and traditional village life. The cultural heritage of Africans in general serve as a resourceful tourist attraction worldwide. They range from chieftaincy affairs, festivals, durbar and many more (Ghana tourism page 2009).



Picture 6; Ghanaian chief (source: Google)

**Panafest-** Panafest is a biennial festival promoting Pan Africanism through Arts and Culture that is held every two years in Ghana - West Africa. Since its inception in 1992, Panafest's theme reflects the political, social and economic advancement of the African nations and the African Diaspora in general. panafest is a cultural event dedicated to enhancement of the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the development of the African continent. It is organized biennially for Africans and people of African descent as well as all persons committed to the well being of Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora.

The essential thrust of Panafest is to enhance development. The festival provides a forum to promote unity between Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora, and affirms the common heritage of African peoples all over the world by defining and promoting Africa's contribution to world civilization. Panafest attracts a diverse assembly of people - ranging from political leaders, eminent personalities and intel-



lectuals - to business concerns, investors and tourists. Central to the celebration are major international performing and visual artists from across Africa and the Diaspora. It is able to bring Rita Marley, the wife of famous Jamaican Reggae singer to settle in Ghana after attending panafest and traced her ancestors to Ghana after the death of her husband (Panafest webpage 2007).

The 44th President of US Barrack Obama and his family also visited Cape Coast castle when they were in Ghana after reading much about Panafest that castle used to harbour slaves in Ghana before being transported from Africa to America in the slavery days. Its objectives are;

- To establish the truth about the history of Africa and experience of its people, using the vehicle of African arts and culture.
- To provide a forum to promote unity between Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora.
- To affirm the common heritage of African peoples the world over and define Africa's contribution to world civilization
- To encourage regular review of Africa's development objectives, strategies and policies.
- To mobilize consensus for the formulation and implementation of potential alternative options for development.



Picture 7: Slavery picture (source: Flickr)

### 5.2.1 Historical heritage

**Historic Monuments-** The chain of forts and castles constitute the trump cards in the regions tourism arsenal. Among the 29 Forts and Castles dotted along the coast of Ghana, 13 are in the central region alone, stretching virtually along its coastline. To the local people, these centuries old trade –posts are potent reminder of colonialism. To Africans in the diasporas, these former-holdings centre for slaves, are part of their history, their roots. The monuments themselves represent the architectural legacies of dozens or so European powers, from the Portuguese and Dutch to the Swedes, The Danes and the Brits who traded in the then Gold Coast, now Ghana in the beginning of the 17th Century(Mensah 2006,303).

The Forts and Castles in the Central Region are among Ghana’s most popular tourist destination particularly the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle which have since the 1990’s been designated as a world heritage monument by UNESCO.

Other colonial legacies in the Region of touristic value are the Fort Victoria and Victoria Park (Cape Coast).Fort st Jago and the Dutch cemetery as well as other forts and historic buildings now in ruins (Mensah 2006).

**Castles and Forts-**Cape Coast is home to ancient castles and forts that were often used during the slave trade as holding areas for human cargo. Go to the Cape Coast Castle, built in the 16th-century and later reconstructed and enlarged, which served as the seat of British administration in the then Gold Coast until. The municipality was the first Portuguese settlement in Ghana. This huge 15th-century fort, that largely remains intact, is the location of one of the first Catholic churches in sub-Saharan Africa. Today, it is the most photographed structure in Ghana. Fort St Jago was primarily used as a military base and stands on a hill commanding fabulous views of both Elmina and the Atlantic Ocean. Cultural shows are often performed at the castles. All Ghana's castles and forts have both been declared World Heritage Monuments by UNESCO. For many Africans in diaspora, the forts and castles are sacred sites where they visit constantly to understand how their forefathers were handled before been transported to the Americas (Arthur& Mensah 2006).





Picture 8; Cape Coast Castle (Picture by Reuters 2009)



Picture 9; U.S. president Barrack Obama and family at Cape Coast Castle ( Picture by Reuters 2009)



Picture 10; Cape Coast Castle (Picture by Reuters 2009)

#### 5.2.2 Natural environmental heritage

**Wildlife species and forest-**There are many wild life species, national parks, eco tourist sites, beaches, sun bay waterfall and many more natural attractions that have the pulling force for tourists to Cape Coast and its environs. The most famous ones are the Elmina beach, Kakum national park, Bali Agung Village, Asafo shrine and many more (Tourism board 2009).

**Nature-** Natural elements that pull tourist to visit a destination could be found everywhere in the Cape Coast municipality. It ranges from Rain forest, sea, sand sun, bird watching, natural parks, wild life(Plants and animals),waterfalls, Mountains, lakes beaches to mention a few. The most famous being the Elmina beach and the Kakum national park (Tourism board 2008).



Picture 11; bird and lizard (source; Google)

**The Kakum national park**-National parks around the globe have been recognized as important and recreational potential to both domestic and international tourist and inhabitants (Buckley 2000). In more ways than one, the Kakum National Park is very famous in Ghana. Unlike the famed park of Kenya, Tanzania and Botswana, Kakum is not a grassland park but a forest one. Together with adjoining Assin Atandanso resource reserve, the park encloses 360km<sup>2</sup> (Ghana Wildlife Department, 2007), protecting plant and animal treasures of the African rainforest. The dense vegetation provides shelter for globally endangered species such as the forest elephant. For instance in 1993 a butterfly, new to science, was discovered and appropriately named 'diopetes Kakumi' (Ghana Wildlife Department 2007).

In addition to trails, there is a platform along a steep ridge rising above the forest canopy where treetops can be seen. There is also a 'canopy walkway' comprising a series of suspension bridges, about twelve stories from forest floor. For overnight accommodation there are family chalets built on stilts one meter off the ground all within the park.





Picture 12, Kakum national park (source; Google 2009)



Picture 13, Ghana international airline (source: Ghana government website)





Picture 14, Kakum national park (source; Google)

**Entertainment-** So far as tourism and entertainment moves side by side, choosing Cape Coast is ones memorable choice of destinations. The hospitality of Ghanaian has given the country and nation in general a good image internationally. Hip life, the modern musical attitude in Ghana is compared to the hip-hop of USA and as such night life in the cities is always full of fun.

Jazz bars, night club, pub, café shops and other entertaining centers are located at vantage points in the country. Beaches, bird watching, and the sun in general pull tourist constantly to the country for entertainment. Not leaving sports aside, Ghana could also boast of many sporting clubs that entertains with its league throughout the year. Amusement parks are also found in the big cities hence entertaining inhabitants (Goeldner & Ritchie 2006).



Picture 15, Elmina beach (source; Google)

### 5.2.3 Other man-made attractions

There are other man-made tourism attractions that currently make this destination a memorable one to visit. Such attractions include colorful markets, conference facilities and hotels, night clubs, traditional music and dance, museums and art galleries. Since these attractions are now becoming popular tourism attraction, it is attracting domestic and international tourist and in a way boosting economic development in the Metropolis (Tourism board 2009).





Picture 16; Chiefs (source; Flickr)



Picture 17; dancing traditional Ghanaian dance (source Flickr)





Picture 18: Modern hotel in Ghana (source; Flickr)

**Tradition**-Central Region also boasts of major traditional festivals, which as in the case of Ghana as a whole, remains unheralded attractions to both local and foreign tourists and visitors. The most popular among all which is held every two years and attract more tourists mostly Africans in Diasporas is the panafest. Chieftaincy is also one important aspect of the Ghanaian culture and as such much attention is given to it. Durbar and festivals also attract tourism throughout the country and Cape Coast. This is the time where the Kings and Royals exhibit the richness of the City's royalty and traditions.

The “Fetu Afahye” (Fetu festival) among others is the most famous and biggest traditional festival celebrated by the Kings and people of cape coast (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Food tourism- Cape Coast is well noted for its traditional food culture throughout Ghana, therefore it is the best place for one to be exposed to real African meal and Ghanaian dishes. There are varieties of food, diet and local African drinks and beverage to enjoy. Ghana, as known in the world to be the second largest cocoa producer of the world has one of the best chocolate you can have in the world with natural cocoa. The dishes included: “Kooko and Maasa”, “Tuo Zaafi”, “Kelewele”, “Dafadutu”, “Aprapransa”, “Kulikuli”, “Ngmedaa”, “Achieke”, “Fomfom” and local drinks like “sobolo”, “prekese” and ginger (Ghana tourism board 2009).



In fact most of the Ghanaian dishes are prepared from ingredients that have medicinal value that are very good for one's health.



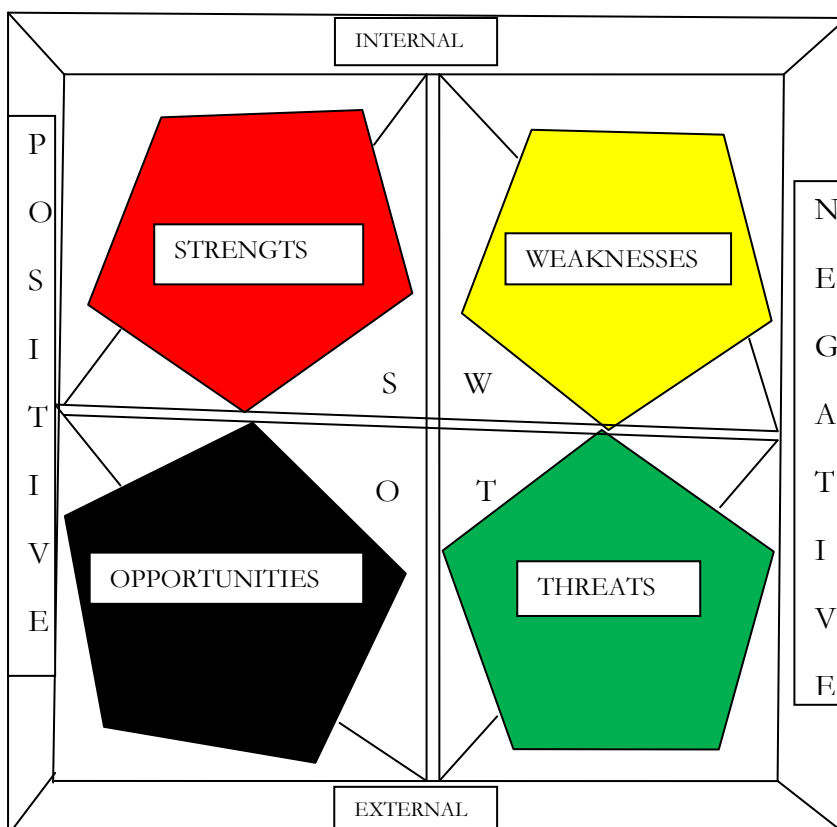
Picture 19: Kotoka International airport; Accra (Source; Google)

## 6 Discussions

### 6.1 SWOT Analysis

As managing and administering tourism resources and destinations is in a way business like, there is the need to identify the current state of the resource or destination and as such plan ahead in the future so as to market and make the destination attractive and patronized. The SWOT analysis is the most famous technique used by firms and organization to access their Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat in their prospective industry so as to steer its affairs to the right direction. It is also a universal tool in strategic planning (Briggs 2001).

Nevertheless, tapping the tourist potential, planning and projecting Cape Coast as a destination should focus on the SWOT analysis as its marketing tool. Here is its analysis;



Picture 20: SWOT analyses (marketing strategy 2000)

### 6.1.1 Strengths

The location of Cape Coast along the coast of Ghana is strength for it to attract more tourists. Ghana is notable in the entire sub-Saharan region for its democratic leadership and peaceful nature as well as the hospitable nature of its citizens and this has earned the country a good image. Therefore cape coast should focus on this good image of Ghana as its marketing strategy in advertizing its destinations (Tourism board 2007).

One other strength that Cape Coast has is man power and people who have the ability and capability to work and satisfy tourism. Many tourism schools are all over Ghana and as such train more professionals in the tourism industry who will use their professional know-how to administer its tourism resources. And the metropolis being the heart-beat of Ghana's tourism has such qualified people working in the industry already. Therefore, they are good asset overcome any other destination or country either locally in Ghana or on the Sub-Saharan continent in general (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Another good strength of the municipality to showcase its potential is the castle and forts which are recognized by UNESCO as world heritage site because they are considers as having outstanding universal value. It is seen that these forts and castles which served as the transit point during the Trans- Atlantic slave trade still exist in Cape Coast. It attracts tourists both domestic and international and as such its location gives cape Coast good image and destination to visit.

Also, there is availability of large unutilized land that is available for future expansion of the municipality. This means the planning committee of Cape Coast could improve the facility any time without thinking of where to get access to land.

Furthermore, Cape Coast and its environs are also noted for salt mining and fishing industry .This attracts traders who could also become tourists. Therefore, with the salt, fishing and tourism, Cape Coast has more room to develop socially and economically (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

### 6.1.2 Weaknesses

Tourism in Ghana per se has its great disadvantage and this has affected negatively in all tourism destination throughout the country. It has to do with the constant change in tourism ministers in the country due to lack of proper knowledge on how to manage Ghana's tourism. Hence, there is no single laid down policy or plan on Ghana's tourism. And this has negative implications of all destinations (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Again, the location of central region is a setback. It could be seen that there is no airport or rail operating in the region and that tourist have to travel to the region by land. And with constant road accidents in the country, tourists are not interested to travel to the remote parts of Ghana and thus spend all their time in Accra, the capital (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

The fact that there is no innovation in Panafest is a major weakness. Panafest is being held every two years in the region and it is expected to attract more participants and tourism during the event, but its major disadvantage is that, always the same programme schedule and arrangement is followed and thus it's boring to witness one same event and programme with no change continuously. Therefore, its participation declines since its inception.

Poor road network and other infrastructure in the region as a whole hinder development in terms of tourism. Lack of good hotels, good drinking water, good restaurants and other infrastructures that go hand in hand with tourism are not in good shape in the municipality and until that is addressed, it will push tourist away from visiting the municipality again and again (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Tourism development is hampered by a general lack of knowledge and awareness of tourism (its requirements, socio-economic impacts, financial returns, etc) among policy and decision makers, financial institutions, potential investors, local communities, and the general public, resulting in undeveloped potential for wealth creation and poverty reduction, as well as environmental degradation (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

### 6.1.3 Opportunities

Despite of the above weakness, tourism in Cape Coast has opportunity to showcase itself and attract more tourists. In recent years, technological advancement in Ghana has expanded to all remote parts of the country and Cape Coast is not left out. Internet access and mobile phone network and coverage have increased and as such tourist could still enjoy their services and communicate with family. This is the technological advancement Ghana has over almost all its neighboring countries and therefore, tourist could prefer travelling to Ghana over others (Tourism ministry 2008).

Another opportunity is promotional advancement in Cape Coast. The Cape Coast tourism board has put in place promotions with the view of attracting tourist. Tourist gets about half percentage discount on accommodation and food when you spend the night in any hotel/motel in the region. Loyal tourist card is also issued to tourist who travels to the forts and castles on a regular basis. Therefore it is an opportunity to be there (Arthur& Mensah 2006).

Strong local political will and good governance in Ghana has earned the country good image to foreign visitors. There is stable government and stable economy in the country and as such tourists are not afraid to travel to any part of Ghana as has been seen in some parts of Africa. Thus there is the opportunity for tourism in the country to grow.

In terms of research and development, Cape Coast has all that it takes to do proper research and hence develop in all aspects of the economy. The Cape Coast University has trained students for years and thus could educate both students and local inhabitants about tourism potential needs and significant so that its impacts could be felt.

#### 6.1.4 Threats

The first and major threat that Ghanaian tourism is facing now is the economic downturn. It is a global economic meltdown which is preventing people's travel and has greatly affected the tourism revenue of Ghana's economy. This is hindering the smooth progress of renovating old and constructing new hotels to accommodate tourist since there is no money (BBC 2009).

Furthermore, strong competition in the continent in terms of tourism is posing a threat to Cape Coast as a destination. Almost all countries in the world want to focus on tourism as an activity to boost their economy and thus tourists choose more famous sites over infamous and upcoming ones (African news 2009).

Moreover, another threat to Cape Coast tourism is the depreciation of its monuments. A close look at the castles and forts as well as many of the resources shows it is wearing out due to poor maintenance. And thus if proper maintenance is not taken, all the forts and castle would be destroyed either naturally or by act of men (Tourism board 2009).

#### 6.1.5 Some operational problems of the development of tourism industry in the Cape Coast

The development of tourism in the central region has resulted in several operational problems. Below are some of the problems.

There is low level of professionalism in the industry. This is one of the major difficulties especially in the private sector. Even though the Hotel Catering and Training School (HOTCATI) has provided a series of skills training, they are inadequate and the level of professionalism especially in service and management

of tourism plant is poor. The result is the unhealthy dependence on expensive short term expatriate skilled labor. The introduction of a Tourism programme at the University of Cape Coast may provide a solution especially if short courses are organized to polish professional skills.

Another problem is the absence of vibrant nightlife in Cape Coast. This problem discourages overnight stay and has therefore made day trips from Accra, the ruler rather than the exception. The effect of this on the absence of effective linkages to attractions is another problem. Despite the proximity of the attraction within a 30km radius of each other, there is a marked absence of linkages and shuttles to attractions. Of the total number of visitors to the attractions 70% are Ghanaians. However, they find it difficult to visit the attractions on their own. This is also a disincentive to foreign independent travelers (Tourism board 2009).

The Ghana Tourist Board is mandated by the PNDC law to regulate the industry. For control, Monitoring and Quality assurance of Standards to be effective and proper, supervision of Drinking Bars, Chop Bars, Snack Shop, Food Sellers Night Clubs, Khebab Sellers, etc. must be undertaken. But the Board lacks the requisite and personnel to undertake this exercise (Speed ghana 2009).

There is an also inadequate public utility service. Despite the improvements in public utility services, a lot is still to be done if the central region can be internationally competitive as a Tourist destination. Low voltage and frequent light cuts, water shortage and poor quality of water, poor road network linking Accra and inadequate Telecommunications services, all these affect services negatively (Speed ghana 2009).

Low level of information dissemination and promotion is also a major problem, militating against the tourism industry. The absence of information centre at attraction sites and other public places, the inadequate private sectors promotion of Tourism businesses and absence of integrated marketing at both domestic and international Target Markets, all affect visitation and Tourism revenue in the region. Efforts have been made in this area but they are inadequate (Touring ghana report 2009).

Poor environmental sanitation is a very serious problem not only in the cape coast district but the whole of Ghana. Tourism and the environment are inseparable partners. However, the rate at which the environment is being littered and degraded if not addressed, would seriously erode the tourism development effort in the Central region. For example sand-winning activities, a quarrying and defecating should be seriously controlled especially along the beaches. Cape Coast, the Regional capital was not among the three cities shortlisted for awards of the Cleanest City during the recent National tourism awards in Accra. This is a cause of grave concern. Leadership of the National Tourism and a filthy environment are clearly incompatible (Konadu Agyemang 2001).

Another problem is ignorance on the part of the community, hence the have the traditional rulers, fisher folks, assemblymen and women, opinion leaders and the general public been involved in decision taking or just informed about developing their areas for Tourism purposes. More community involvement will avert antagonism towards visitors.

The problem of chieftaincy disputes and festivals have serious and negative consequences on tourism development. This affects reliability on the festivals by visitors and does not promote a peaceful environment at the tourism destinations (Daily graphic 2007).

Lack of access to credit facilities is also a major problem affecting the industry. even though large sums of government loans were made available to the Hotel industry before Panafest '94', there is still a marked absence of credit facilities in the form of soft loans to support small and medium scale tourism businesses only make a small margin of profit. This affects their ability to service huge loans. It is therefore important for financial institutions to consider granting small credit facilities to small-scale businesses for easy payments (Arthur & Mensah 2006).

Lack of tour operators or tour-operating firms in the region is also affecting the development of tourism in the districts, most of them affecting the development of tourism in the Central region. There is no effective and efficient tour operating firms in the district. Thus most of the tours are organized in Accra therefore depriving the region of the tourism revenue it could have earned from such operations (Tourism board 2009).

## 6.2 Prospects of the tourism industry in the Cape Coast

The municipality has enough potential in terms of tourism and therefore the problem highlighted above should not in any way dampen the enthusiasm and determination to make it a truly competitive international tourist destination by the next millennium. Among these opportunities is:

There are opportunities for the production of craft and souvenir items for the tourist traffic. Souvenir items and crafts that are related to the attractions visited go to reinforce and enhance the memories and experience of the visitor about the destination. Miniature Cape Coast Castle, "T" shirt, canopy walkway, carving of traditional festival scenes, etc. would help put more revenue into the local community to alleviate poverty (Teye 2000).

Another prospect in the tourism industry is the development of water based activities. The tourism product in the region at this stage is not enough to ensure a longer visitor stay. There is the need for more activity based tourism like Scuba diving, Boat cruises, Sport fishing, water skiing, boat restaurant services, etc. to enhance the current attractions. A lot of these can be developed on and along the Fosu Lagoon at Bakano in the Cape Coast District (Bank of Ghana report 2008).

Recreational and amusement parks or centers should be developed in the region at close proximity to the attractions to prolong the visitors stay. According to the World Tourism Organization (2003), “in areas where the local conditions are not conducive to the development of other activities, the landscape, climate, water, air and sun become raw materials for tourism”.

Promotion and development of city tours. Funding must be found for the development and enhancement of historical cemeteries, residences of elderly statesmen, sidewalks, public places of convenience and washrooms, improvement in sanitation and security, etc. for the institution of Tours in Cape Coast and Elmina. The birth place of Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary general, Jacob Wilson Say, and John Mensah Sabah etc. Should be enhanced and marketed for an interesting tour experience. A regional Hall of fame could be established to honour identified statesmen in the region. Hostels and hostels must be developed to provide much cheaper accommodation facilities for visitors especially domestic tourists. The Panafest 97 showed that the Hostel type of accommodation is very popular provided it is clean and well run. The universities and Hospitals could use them (Tourism report 2007).

The village tourism concept is another prospect in the industry. Investors are being encouraged to go into the construction of hotel facilities, using the same raw materials as the local community and the community to manage the unit, so to improve their income levels. The Village tourism concepts, which have been tried successfully in the Casamence region of Senegal, could be established in the community around the Kakum forest and other attractions. Craft villages could also be established (Ghana tourism board 2009).

Communication centers could be established at attraction sites and strategic public places. This will ensure effective communication, an ingredient necessary to the success of tourism industry. The institution of more attractive events like trade fair, festivals is necessary to fill the gap a year after Panafest. There should be cultural and traditional innovations which will enhance and promote the attractions in the region as well as promoting, protecting and preserving the environment (Andrew Holden 2008).



## 7 Conclusion, recommendations and further studies

The purpose of the research was to assess the economic impact tourism has on Cape Coast as well as how to showcase the tourism attractiveness of Cape Coast internationally. In view of this, some recommendations and suggestions will be highlighted to enable management and stakeholders improve the destination. Over the years, tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings have been growing significantly. This phenomenon can be further enhanced by the characteristic hospitality of the Ghanaian. However, after considering the state of the tourism industry in Ghana today, the country has a long way to go to get the industry to levels, which pertain in African countries like the Gambia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Morocco. A lot needs to be done if the country wants to make headway (African news 2009).

The road network should be renovated to enhance tourist movement as well as other commercial activities to flourish. All the 'pot-holes' should be filled to improve transportation in the municipality and also all choked gutter should be distilled. Furthermore, local people should be educated on environmental cleanliness and hence law could also be instituted to punish anyone found littering the environment.

An effective and efficient travel and tour agency should be established in Cape Coast. This firm should be linked with other tour operators in Europe and America such as Aurinkomatkat in Finland to enable them sell tour packages and trips to the municipality. Since tourists are very much concerned with their safety, they prefer to be in the hands of well-known and efficient tour agencies and operators. Therefore, the tour operators in Cape Coast should engage themselves in 'Out-bound and in-bound Tour operations'.

A recommendation is made to educate the inhabitants in the municipality about how their actions and reactions could affect or promote their destination. Hence, they should be involved in decision making about how to promote tourism in their locality. Once they are part of decision making, they would also help in the implementation to the benefit of all (Tourism board 2009).

A recommendation is also made for the provision of adequate public utility services like good water, electricity and communication equipments to work effectively. Despite its existence, it should be serviced to make it up to date.

Even if Cape Coast is known to be an interesting area culturally (Kweka 2004) and hence with potential for in terms of ecotourism, there are signs of serious natural resources degradation. Sacred sites and forests have suffered from encroachment with such intensity that some areas are being used as farmland.

A question has to be raised about whether the traditional protection will be enough for the sacred forests and other sites in the future. If the traditional ways of protecting the natural resources are not passed to the next generation, the heritage available in Cape Coast will disappear.

There is the need to build and develop more viable tourist sites as well as build more hotels and similar establishments in the country to rake in more foreign exchange. Ghana's diplomatic missions in co-operation with tourism development agencies must spearhead marketing of Ghana's tourism potential overseas. This needs to be tackled with greater zeal and focus. For example, the successes of the national football team at the recently held World Cup in Germany, has laid a good foundation for tourism development, and this must be built upon. This should, however, go hand in hand with developing attractive local tourist sites so that they don't become a disappointment to foreign tourists after spending so much to come into the country (Bank of Ghana report 2009).

It is important for ecotourism stakeholders and planners to consider the right approach in planning and administering ecotourism that preserves the tradition and culture of people, which has been agreed by local community as an attraction to the area. Without proper planning and control of ecotourism, the attitudes of the local inhabitants towards ecotourism can go from euphoria to apathy to annoyance to antagonism (Fennel 2007).

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